

# Computer-Based-Testing and the New GED®

## Frequently Asked Questions



### **Why was a new GED® test introduced in 2014?**

The GED® is a nationally recognized high school equivalency credential. To keep the GED® aligned to national high school curricula and learning standards, the new GED® launched in 2014 is based on the Common Core Curriculum Standards. Many states are adopting Common Core into their high school programs to introduce a baseline of higher level learning standards to better prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century careers and higher education.

To additionally prepare test takers for 21<sup>st</sup> century careers and higher education, the new GED® is delivered using modern computer-based-testing (CBT) technology. CBT also addresses many security concerns regarding high-stakes testing and provides a more efficient testing delivery system.

### **When did computer-based GED® testing start?**

To ensure test takers had access to the new 2014 GED® test bank, local testing centers with direction from the State of Michigan, Workforce Development Agency successfully launched GED® computer-based testing using the 2002 version of the GED® in 2012. The 2002 version of the GED® and paper-based testing was discontinued December 31, 2013. Local GED® testing centers continue to expand computer-based- testing statewide for the 2014 test.

### **Will paper-based testing be available for the 2014 version of the GED®?**

No, paper-based testing is no longer an option for test takers in Michigan.

### **Will test takers who have not passed the 2002 version of the GED®, or who have passed some parts but not all of the 2002 GED® sections, have to start over with the new computer-based 2014 GED® if all requirements are not met by December 31, 2013?**

Yes. Test takers who have not passed all five (5) sections of the current GED® by the December 31, 2013, will need to start over with the new GED® test. When the GED Testing Service writes a new version of the GED, the older version is closed/phased-out.

### **How will access to the computer-based GED® be addressed for testers without a computer or the internet?**

Test takers must register and schedule their test by either using the Internet or by phone:

- By computer they may access the site at [www.gedcomputer.com](http://www.gedcomputer.com)
- By phone they may call Pearson VUE at 1-877-392-EXAM-GED or 1-877-392-6433

Testers and others must be aware that only test registration and scheduling can be completed on-line. The actual GED® test is **never** taken "on-line". Testers must take the GED® test at an authorized Pearson VUE Testing Center that has been approved by the GED® Testing Service, and the State of Michigan.

### **Why is computer-based testing important and beneficial for GED® testers?**

The use of the computer will help many test takers to become more computer savvy. This will better prepare test takers for careers and higher education. The transition to GED® computer based testing is also driving adult educators to teach basic computer keyboarding skills (which is all that is needed to take the test).

### **Is new 2014 computer-based GED® test more difficult for tester takers to pass?**

According to the GED® Testing Service, test takers are passing the current computer-based version of the GED® at a higher rate than the paper-based version of the test. It is anecdotal at this point but it seems that computer-based-testing is lessening test-taker anxiety, and stress. Test takers have control over when and where they test. Test takers also schedule their own appointments to take their tests individually, as opposed to paper-based testing which is scheduled at someone else's discretion and conducted with groups of testers. The format of the computer-based test is more interactive, and allows testers better ways to bookmark answers they are not sure about in order to answer later.

The digital divide is always a concern, particularly in some of the rural and large urban areas of the country. The City of Atlanta has implemented computer-based-testing in 100% of its testing centers.

The 2014 version of the GED® test is currently being normed based on sample test results from 2014 graduating high school seniors. There is no data at this time to definitively say if the passing rates will be lower with the new GED®. It is anticipated that the new GED® will be more rigorous with the incorporation of the Common Core Curriculum Standards. The increased rigor may be balanced by other factors to help test takers succeed. The passing rates for the current GED® are higher. The higher passing rates may be due to anxiety reducing attributes of computer-based-testing mentioned above. Secondly, test takers will have more powerful preparation tools. Most notable is the new GED® will include a diagnostic program which will provide test takers with a GAP-Analysis by content area, showing testing strengths and weaknesses in specific areas. This will allow test takers to focus on targeted areas that need to be strengthened in order to improve scores.

**Is it true that the cost of to obtain a GED® is increasing because of the new test and computer-based testing?**

For some test-takers the answer may be yes, but on average no. At on the local level, pricing for the 2002 version of the GED® varied drastically from test center to test center. For example, due to subsidies, some testers who have successfully completed a GED® preparation course may have paid as little as \$30-\$50 dollars for all 5 tests. On the other hand, some testers may have paid upwards of \$300 dollars. The average was about \$30 per test. All states implementing computer-based GED® testing are required to set a standard price for the computer-based version of the GED® test. The standard price in Michigan for the CBT version was \$30 per test (which is about what most testers pay statewide right now). Organizations can still subsidize computer based testing fees by purchasing vouchers for testers through Pearson VUE.

**Is it true that the only way test-takers can pay for the computer-based GED® is with a credit card?**

In addition to a credit card, in many cases test-takers can arrange to pay a testing center with cash in exchange for a voucher which can be used to pay for testing.

**Will accommodations be provided for test takers with disabilities?**

As with paper-based GED® testing, accommodations will be available upon request by test takers with eligible diagnosed disabilities.